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DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY:
IRISH ANTIQUE ART METAL
WORK.

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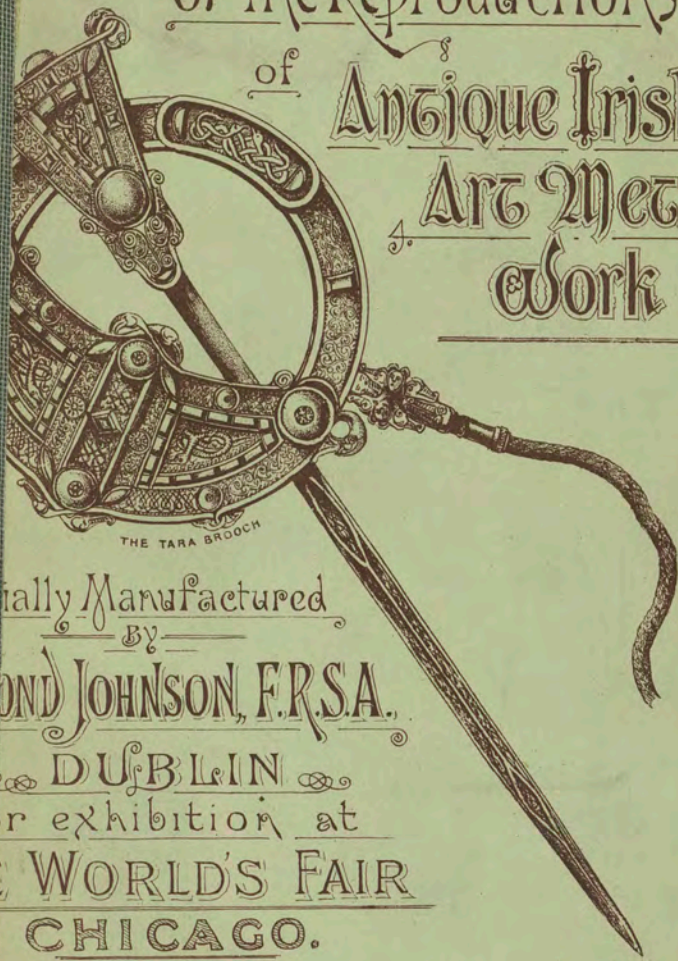
of the Reproductions

of

Antique Irish

Art Metal

Work



THE TARA BROOCH

ially Manufactured
By

AND JOHNSON, F.R.S.A.

DUBLIN

or exhibition at

WORLD'S FAIR

CHICAGO.

1893.

BRITISH SECTION
Depart. H. Group 98.

DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY
OF
IRISH ANTIQUE ART METAL WORK

*FAC-SIMILE REPRODUCTIONS OF WHICH HAVE
BEEN SPECIALLY MANUFACTURED*

FOR
EXHIBITION AT CHICAGO

BY
EDMOND JOHNSON,
Fellow of the Royal Society of Antiquaries (Ireland).

Dublin:
PRINTED BY SEALY, BRYERS AND WALKER
(A. T. & C. L.),
94, 95 & 96 MIDDLE ABBEY STREET.
1893.

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MIDDLE ABBEY STREET.

2281

EDMOND JOHNSON,

Jeweller to the Irish Court,

94 & 95 GRAFTON ST. AND 46 WICKLOW ST.,

DUBLIN.

Copies of any of the Articles exhibited can
be had only at the above address, or from

Messrs. TIFFANY & CO., New York.

ALSO

Miniature Reproductions of the various Brooches,
including the 'TARA,' the 'TORC,' the 'FIBULA,' the
'STACKALLEN,' the 'QUEEN'S,' same as Manufactured
for Her Majesty, &c., &c.

P65-74115

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
CROSS OF CONG	13
SHRINE OF ST. MANCHAN	15
„ „ ST. PATRICK'S GOSPELS	21
„ „ ST. PATRICK'S TOOTH	26
„ „ ST. PATRICK'S HAND	31
„ AND BELL OF ST. PATRICK	36
„ OF ST. MOLAISE	39
„ „ ST. LACHTIN'S ARM	43
„ „ LOUGH ERNE	47
„ „ DIMMA'S BOOK	50
KAVANAGH CHARTER HORN	51
CROZIER OF CORMAC M'CARTHY	53
„ „ CLONMACNOISE	54
„ „ MURUS OF FAHAN	54
„ „ ST. NAAL	54
„ „ BERACH OF BARRY OR GEARR BERACH	54
ARDAGH CUP	55
TORQUES	63
ARMILLÆ	67
FIBULÆ	70
GORGETS	72
LUNULÆ	73
DIADEMS	75
ST. PATRICK'S CROSS	76
BELL OF ARMAGH	78
TARA BROOCH	80
QUEEN'S BROOCH	83

	PAGE
ARDAGH BROOCH }	84
CELTIC „ }	
KILKENNY BROOCH	85
UNIVERSITY „	86
KNIGHT TEMPLAR'S BROOCH	86
CLARENDON BROOCH	87
DUNSHAUGHLIN „	87
CONYNTHAM „	88
ARBUTUS „	88
DALRIADA „	88
BELL „	89
BULLÆ OR AMULETS	90
RING MONEY	90
EARRINGS	91
GOLD PINS	91
HAIR ORNAMENTS	92
PENNACULAR BROOCHES	92
CLOAK PINS (including bodkin, hammer-headed, and ring pins)	93
SPRING BROOCHES AND PINS	95
HINGE BROOCH	96
TURTLE BROOCHES	96
MEYTHEES	97
DUNVEGAN AND SITULA CUPS	98
BRIAN BOROIHME HARP	99
RUSH-LIGHT STANDS	99
CELTS	101
TRUMPETS	103
LETTERS, ETC., FROM THE BOOK OF KELLS ...	105
MR. DAY'S COLLECTION (originals)	107
THE LIMERICK CROZIER (lent by the Most Rev. Dr. O'Dwyer, Bishop of Limerick)	107

INTRODUCTION.

THE idea of making exact *fac-simile* copies of all the most important specimens of our celebrated ancient Irish art metal work occurred to me on the first announcement of the "Great World's Fair" at Chicago.

I had peculiar facilities for carrying out this work from the fact that my pattern drawers contained impressions and plaster casts actually taken from these relics of antiquity as they were found from time to time. In nearly every case some slight restoration was necessary to clear the dirt of ages from their fine traceries, and thus they found their way into my hands and those of my ancestors, who preserved exact moulds of these art treasures which cannot now be touched in any of the various institutions in which these collections are preserved.

Thus it will be seen that this collection is quite unique and faithfully portrays these various articles in their completely restored state, so that one can form an exact idea of the magnificence and splendour they presented to the eye when in actual use in all their beautiful contrasts of gold, silver and enamels. Many difficulties presented themselves in their production: niello work had to be introduced, and as the

modern niello process produced a totally different colour from the old one (which is much paler), a series of experiments had to be gone through before the difficulty was surmounted; champ levé enamels had also to be introduced, notably so in the "Cross of Cong." This enamelling is not done now, nor are the rough enamels made that will fuse at the proper temperature.

Finally all these enamelling difficulties were overcome, and the proper shades procured, so that the harmony of colour in the whole work was secured. The large gold neck torc (No. 7), a curious piece of workmanship, which to the ordinary observer looks simple enough, but is in reality very difficult, indeed; set a workman to make one, and unless he is fortunate enough to hit upon the way (which my foreman did after a fortnight's trial) he will not be able to make it at all. The metal which is very thin is thicker as it approaches the centre where it is solid. Enormous force is required in its manufacture, and the ancient workman must have had some tools of considerable dimensions to produce it.

And here let me acknowledge the untiring energy and zeal in which my foreman, Mr. James Wallace, not only superintended their manufacture, but read up the whole subject and made himself thoroughly conversant with the history of the various articles

reproduced as well as the various styles of our antique Irish ornaments.

I have to thank Dr. Valentine Ball and Major MacInery of the Science and Art Museum and Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, for their assistance in giving me access to their celebrated collection.

To the Rev. Dr. Abbot, F.T.C.D., Librarian of Trinity College, Dublin, for facilities afforded me, in reference to their art treasures and photographs from that priceless gem "The Book of Kells," and to Robert Day, Esq., F.S.A., High Sheriff for Cork, and many other antiquarians for their assistance in the perfecting of my collection.

EDMOND JOHNSON

Art Jeweller,

Grafton Street,

DUBLIN.

March, 1893.

The following letters from some of the first Antiquarians in Ireland who have inspected the collection, are given *in extenso* :—

Science and Art Museum,
Dublin,
11th February, 1893.

I have much pleasure in testifying to the extreme care with which Mr. E. Johnson's restoration of the examples of Celtic Art, intended to be exhibited at Chicago, have been executed. I am aware that neither trouble nor expense have been spared in producing as nearly as possible representations of what the originals were, when first made and complete, and that this collection of reproductions is absolutely unique at the present moment.

Mr. Johnson is to be congratulated generally on these results, and, if I may say so, in an especial degree upon having in his service the skilled artists who have been able to execute his instructions with so much attention to faithful reproduction of details accompanied by considerable artistic taste in treatment.

V. BALL, C.B., LL.D., F.R.S.,
Director,
Science and Art Museum,
Leinster House,
Dublin.

Science and Art Museum, Kildare Street, Dublin,
Royal Irish Academy Collection,

4th March, '93.

DEAR SIR,

Your copies of Ancient Irish metal work in their collection are really admirable. Those of the Ardagh Chalice, the Cross of Cong, the fibula known as the "Tara Brooch," and the Reliquary of St. Lactin, as works of art possess a very high degree of merit. They are most effective and are worthy representations of the originals.

It is indeed gratifying that a reproduction so successful of objects of enduring national interest should be due to Irish enterprise and the skill of native artificers.

Faithfully yours,

R. J. MACINERY, Curator.

Edmond Johnson, Esq.

Carrig Breac, Howth,
March 3rd, 1893.

DEAR SIR,

I think Ireland owes you a debt of gratitude for the great work you have done towards the illustration of her National Antiquities.

The collection of reproductions of old Irish metal work, which you have created with so much care and generous zeal, cannot fail to astonish and enlighten the crowds who have never seen the originals.

With hearty congratulations for your success,

I remain, yours truly,

MARGARET STOKES.

Authoress of *Early Christian Art in Ireland*,
&c., &c.

20 Harcourt Street,
Dublin.

DEAR MR. JOHNSON,

I have seen your reproduction of Irish Antiquities by your kind permission, and can only express my amazement at such a representative collection of these articles. They are most faithful realizations (not copies) of the originals.

I would particularize the Cross of Cong, the Ardagh Cup, the shrines and gold ornaments, from the difficulties of manufacture, in executing our Celtic patterns. As for the brooches, their number and accurate reproduction make that portion of your exhibit alone one of surpassing value.

Yours, believe me, very sincerely,

W. FRAZER, F.R.C.S.,

Hon. Fellow Society of Antiquities of Scotland,
M.R.I.A., &c.

3 Sydney Place, Cork,
January 27th, 1893.

MY DEAR MR. JOHNSON,

I cannot tell you with what feelings of pleasure I examined your reproductions in *fac-simile* of objects in Irish Art from the Museums of the Royal Irish Academy, Trinity College, Dublin, and from the collections of private individuals. Your art workmen have succeeded to perfection in restoring what I considered to be *a lost art*, and have so well imitated the ornaments and decorations, the forms and substances of the various shrines, crosses, cups and personal ornaments, that all who take any interest in the metal work, and art workers who flourished here so long ago, are under a deep debt of obligation to you.

I cannot refrain from thus writing,

And remain,

Yours very truly,

ROBERT DAY, F.R.S.



THE CROSS OF CONG.

HIS beautiful processional cross was originally made for the church of Tuam, seat of the Archbishopric of Connaught, and for Muiredach O'Duffy, who died in the year 1150. It was made to enshrine a portion of the true Cross by order of King Turlough O'Connor, as we learn from an entry in the *Annals of Inisfallen*, A.D. 1123, the year in which the first General Council of Lateran was held, during the pontificate of Pope Calixtus. The Annalist states: "A portion of the true Cross came into Ireland, and was enshrined at Roscommon, by Turlough O'Connor." This statement is supported by inscriptions along the sides of the cross which may be thus translated:

Pray for Muiredach U. Dubthaig, the Senior of Erin.

Pray for Terdelbach O'Chonchobair, for the King of Erin, for whom this shrine was made.

Pray for Donnall MacFlannacan U. Dubthaig, Bishop of Connacht and comarb of Comman and Ciaran, under whose superintendence this shrine was made.

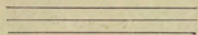
Pray for MacIjesu MacBratdan O'Echan who made this shrine.

The shaft of the cross measures 2 ft. 6 in. high; breadth or span of arms, 1 ft. $6\frac{3}{4}$ in.; thickness of shaft and arms, $1\frac{3}{4}$ in. It is made of fine gold, silver, bronze, enamel, niello work and jewels.

On the central plate on the face, at the junction of the arms, is a boss surmounted by a convex crystal. Thirteen jewels remain of the eighteen which were disposed at regular intervals along the edges and on the face of the shaft and arms, and spaces are visible for nine others, which were placed at intervals down the centre. Two beads remain of four settings which surrounded the central boss. The shaft terminates below in the grotesque head of an animal, beneath which it is attached to a spherical elaborately ornamented ball, surmounting the socket in which was inserted the pole or shaft for carrying the cross.

This relic was carried from Tuam to Cong, either by the Archbishop O'Duffy, who died in the Augustinian Abbey there in 1150, or by King Roderick O'Conor, the last monarch of Ireland, who himself founded and endowed the Abbey of Cong. It was concealed at the time of the Reformation and found

early in the present century by the parish priest, the Rev. Mr. Prendergast, in an oaken chest in a cottage in the village. It was purchased from the successor to Mr. Prendergast by Professor MacCullagh, who presented it to the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy in 1839.



THE SHRINE OF ST. MANCHAN.

THIS relic is preserved in the chapel of Boher, the Roman Catholic place of worship for the parish of Lemanaghan, Queen's County, under the care of the parish priest. It was formerly kept in a small thatched building used as a chapel; and tradition has it that this building, having been burned, the shrine was miraculously preserved, and was the only thing saved from the fire. It was then placed in the keeping of the ancient Irish family of Moony, of the Dcon, but in consequence of the resort of the peasantry to the house of the present Mr. Moony's grandfather to swear on the shrine, it was, at the request of the then Roman

Catholic parish clergyman, handed over to him, from whom it has come down to its present guardian.

It is in the form of a gabled roof of very steep pitch, and was so formed in imitation of the high pitched stone roofs which covered the ancient "cells" of the saints, in whose honour they were made.

There are four heavy bronze rings attached to the shrine by clamps of the same metal, which served for the insertion of staves used in carrying it in procession. The sides of the clamps are adorned in various modifications of the T pattern. The bottom is surrounded by a border of the same, relieved at regular intervals by enamels of the champ levé design, being sunk into the bronze, and the spaces between them enriched in chevron ornaments executed by the graver. On the space enclosed by the border is fixed a Greek cross, the arms terminating by raised bosses similar to those commonly found on our ancient stone crosses, and enriched with interlaced ornaments. The spaces formed by the arms of the crosses are occupied by figures in high relief in various forms of civil and military garb. The first figure to the left has his hands

joined, and is habited in a close-fitting tunic, over which are the plaits of another and outer sleeved covering ; a girdle encircles the waist, and from it falls a richly embroidered philibeg or kilt reaching below the knees. The next figure holds the handle of some weapon, probably a short sword, and the left is raised and open, with the palm turned out. The third, similarly habited, has the left hand closed on what seems the pommel of a short sword. The fourth wears a plain plaited kilt, and holds a battle-axe in the right hand, the edge of which passes between the fingers of the left ; the beard is long and bifid, and the girdle is a twisted cord. The fifth figure resembles the first, except that the girdle is ornamented and the beard curled. It will be remarked that the figures increase gradually in height towards the inside of the shrine, where the groups are intersected by the upright limb of the cross. Passing the cross, the right-hand group commences with a figure resembling the fifth, already described, except that the girdle is twisted and the hands are not joined. The seventh figure resembles the sixth, as also appears the case with the

eighth, whilst the ninth resembles the fourth. The tenth effigy holds a book in his hand, and the scolloped juncture of the tunic with the kilt is not hidden by a girdle. These ten figures are, and it must be allowed, most interesting examples of the lay and military costumes of the Irish in the twelfth century. That the dress is of the chieftain order is almost certain, from the richness of the embroidery of the kilts and some of the girdles.

The framework of the shrine is composed of yew wood, the bottom being of the same material. The bones of St. Manchan are said to be still enclosed in the shrine, and the following legend relating to them was told in September, 1869: "Some time after St. Manchan and a great part of his people died of the great plague and were buried, the saint's 'bohooly' (buachail or cow-boy) being left without a protector, some men came and drove away his cattle; for in those days whoever was strong did what he liked, and cared nothing for law or justice. The 'bohooly' called on St. Manchan for help, who immediately appeared to him; but he was so overjoyed to see his master that

he threw his arms about the saint who, thereupon fell into a heap of dry bones, for no sinful mortal should have touched him. On this the clergy of the place gathered up the bones, and they made the shrine now in Boher chapel to hold them. The 'bohooly,' (it is satisfactory for the interests of 'law and justice' to know it) recovered the cattle, and the robbers lost their lives, through the power of Saint Manchan. And so, although the 'houses' of St. Manchan and his mother are to be seen to this day, there is not any tomb of the saint to be heard of at Lemanaghan."

The shrine of St. Manchan at present bears no inscription, but it is probable that the cresting, now lost, may have told by whom the shrine was made, as well as the name of the king, chief or ecclesiastic, at whose expense it was constructed. The metallic coverings of one side and end are nearly perfect, but the two others have lost much of their ornamentation. On the back only the cross and a small portion of the basal border remain. It is evident that the date of the metal work cannot be placed so early as the seventh century when St. Manchan died; indeed it is impossible

to assign it to a period much prior to that of the Cross of Cong, which is a dated work of the middle of the twelfth century. The sound condition of the timber framework of the shrine confirms the opinion here expressed; and if we could only suppose that the passage already quoted from the *Annals of the Four Masters* related to this fine example of Hiberno-Celtic art, we might be certain that we had here the munificent gift of King Rory O'Connor.



THE SHRINE OF ST. PATRICK'S GOSPELS.

The following account of this relic of sacred antiquity has been taken from *Christian Inscriptions in the Irish Language*. Vol. ii. By George Petrie, LL.D.



N the parish of Clones, in the barony of Clankelly, the remains of a great pagan fort still exist, which, probably, belonged to the chieftain Eos, from whom the place is named. A church was founded there by St. Tigernach, who had succeeded St. MacCarthen as bishop of Clogher, and removed that see to Clones. The abbey was dissolved by the Act of Henry VIII., and at the suppression was granted to Sir Henry Duke. The existing remains of this ancient ecclesiastical establishment are the ruins of the ancient abbey, with its round belfry, an ancient burial ground, which surrounds it, and another in the neighbourhood, in which are many curiously decorated tombstones. The interesting relic of the church here is the Cumdach or Book-

Shrine, called the Domnach Airgead, which bears the following inscriptions:—

Johannes O'Karbri Comorbanus S[ancti] Tig[er]-
naciai Permisit.

(John O'Karbri, successor of St. Tighearnach, ordered it.)

This inscription leaves no doubt that the shrine on which it occurs not only belonged to the monastery of Clones, but that the person at whose cost, or by whose permission, the outer ornamental cover was made, was John O'Carbry, the abbot of Clones, whose death is recorded by the Four Masters to have been in the year 1353 A.D.

Johanes : O'Barrdan : Fabricavit.

(John O'Barrdan made it.)

The second inscription is valuable as showing that the shrine was a work of a native Irish artist; and this name may be, perhaps, identified with that of the ecclesiastic whose death is recorded by the Four Masters immediately after that of a bishop of Clogher, in the following passage:—"A.D. 1369. The Deacon O'Bardon died."

This Cumdach was made to contain a copy of the Gospels, only two leaves of which have been read. They are the beginning of the Gospel of St. Matthew, in the Latin tongue, the version slightly differing from that of the vulgate of St. Jerome. According to tradition, this Gospel belonged to St. Patrick, and was presented by him to St. MacCarthen, patron of Clogher.

The shrine is composed of three distinct covers, the first of which is of yew wood, and may possibly be coeval with the manuscript ; the second, of copper plated with silver, is, probably, work of the tenth or eleventh century ; the third, which is silver gilt, belongs to the period shortly before the year 1353. If it could be discovered at what year John O'Carbry was made abbot of Clones, then the period of the execution of the latter could be narrowed to the years between that event and his death. On the upper side of the case the Crucifixion is represented, surmounted by a shield on which the implements of the passion may be seen. At his head is a dove enamelled in gold, and above this a small reliquary covered with a crystal. Our

Saviour's form is attended by those of eleven saints—Columba, Bridget, and Patrick; James, Peter, and Paul; St. Michael and the Virgin and Child; St. Patrick, presenting the Cumdach to St. MacCarthen; and a female figure with her hand upon her heart whose name is unknown. The lower side of the case is a large cross on which there is an inscription ending with the word "Cloachar," too much injured to be wholly deciphered. The box is decorated with crystals and precious stones, and a border runs round each side, showing grotesque animals and scrolls, but not executed in the spirit of the earlier schools.

The front side of the case presents convex ornamental bosses, ornamented with figures of grotesque animals and traceries enamelled with a blue paste, and in the centre of each cup there is an uncut crystal, covering relics like those at the top. The figures of four horsemen, clad in the Irish costume of the fourteenth century, are represented on this side. The ornaments contained within the rim on the opposite side are lost, and their place has been supplied with figures which were on their right and left sides.

The back of this case is divided into three compartments. In the central one stands the figure of St. Catherine, in relief, with a monk in the attitude of prayer, and the figure of a boy is engraved on the field of the tablet.

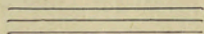
In the compartment to the left of St. Catherine, the figure of an ecclesiastic may be seen seated on a throne, with a cross in his left hand, and his right raised in benediction, probably representing Mac Carthen or St. Tighernach. In the other compartment stands the figure of St. John the Baptist, holding in his left hand a round medallion or picture of the Lamb, and in his right a scroll, on which is inscribed "Ecce Agnus Dei." A figure of the daughter of Herodias, with the head of St. John the Baptist on a charger appears engraved on the field of this tablet.

Within the shrine were found the ancient parchments, one of them being double; each of these membranes consists of a parchment skin, folded into the shape of a book, and are believed to be copies of the Gospels.

The representation on the upper side of the box,

of a bishop presenting a Cumdach, or box to another ecclesiastic, illustrates an event recorded in a fragment of an ancient life of St. MacCarthen, preserved by Colgan.

This Cumdach was found in the neighbourhood of Clones, in the County of Monaghan, its original locality. Mr. George Smith first procured it from the Maguire family, descendants of the ancient lords of Fermanagh, and sold it to Colonel Westenra, afterwards Lord Rossmore, from whom it was purchased by the Academy for the sum of £300, in 1846.



THE SHRINE OF ST. PATRICK'S TOOTH.

THIS shrine was made to contain the tooth of St. Patrick, believed to be that which was loosened from his mouth and fell on the door-sill of St. Bron's Church, the old church of Killaspugbrone, situated in the Barony of Carbury, in the County of Sligo. The name is in Irish, Cill-easping Broin, the church of Bishop Bron, and the ancient name of the district in

which it is situated is Caiseal Irræ, or Cuil Irra, to the south-west of the town of Sligo. Bron was a saint whose memory is thus venerated in the martyrology of Donegal, June 8 :—" Bron, Bishop of Caiseal Irræ, in Ui Fiachrach Muaidhe, A.D. 511."

This singular relic may be justly regarded as a curious unique specimen illustrative of the state of the arts in Ireland during the fourteenth century ; on one side Christ is represented on the cross, over which four figures of saints in their proper ecclesiastical costumes appear, and four others are placed in a parallel line below. A line running across the centre contains a Latin inscription setting forth that the shrine was ornamented by Thomas de Bramighem, Lord of Athenry, and who died in the year 1376 ; and as we learn in Sir Bernard Burke's *Extinct Peerage of Ireland*, was the only Baron of Athenry who bore this name. It is, therefore, probable that this shrine is the work of the middle of the fourteenth century. In the second inscription the names are given of the five saints whose figures appear on the shrine below, while the three central ones are those of the principal saints

of Ireland, namely, Benon, Brigid, Patric, Colum-
quille, and Brendan, and those on each side are of
two saints belonging to the Western Coast of Ireland.
The other side is divided into four compartments by
a richly ornamented cross in gold and silver, with
filagree work and studded with crystals, amber, and
coloured glass.

The compartments formed by the cross contain
historic or allegorical devices which have never been
clearly explained. The first represents a bishop with
a figure kneeling at his feet, a tree at either side with
a bird and two dogs on the ground running at each
other. The second has a figure of an ecclesiastic
seated in a chair, a book in one hand and the other
hand pointing upwards; a church with large windows
in the pointed style appears in the distance. The
third represents a king seated playing on a harp rest-
ing on his knee, a small instrument representing that
called the Harp of Brian Boroimhe preserved in
Trinity College, Dublin. In the distance there is a
large Gothic church resembling that in the second
compartment. The fourth contains a standing figure

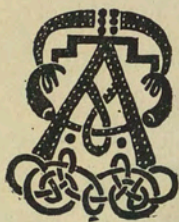
of an ecclesiastic with a crosier. It appears from the several ancient lives of St. Patrick that in the old age of the Saint his teeth were sought for with avidity by his disciples, and preserved with care in their churches, some of which, as Kill Fiacail in Munster, and Cluam Fiacal, near Armagh, derived their names from them. In the Tripartite Life of this Saint, supposed to have been written by St. Erin in the sixth or seventh century, but which, because interval evidence of it having been compiled in the tenth from more ancient documents, mention is made of six of the Saint's teeth being thus preserved, on one of which the following account is given:—"To him, while tarrying in that place, came St. Bronius, Bishop of Casselirra, and St. MacRuine, patron saint of the church of Corcaraidh, and there he wrote for them an alphabet." "And I heard," said an ancient author, "from another, that in the same place he gave a tooth out of his mouth to Bishop Bronius because he was dear to Patrick."

"Then, also, the holy man laid the foundations of the church of Casselirra, in the porch of which is the stone on which fell his tooth, of which mention has

been made. The tooth venerated as being preserved in Casselirra, is that which this case is supposed to contain, and the respect with which it was regarded has even outlived the Reformation. In an ancient account of Connaught, written in the seventh century, the Fiacail Phadriugh is spoken of as the most venerated relic in the province, and the various superstitious purposes to which it was then usually applied are discovered. Thus, through its supposed miraculous power, it enabled its possessors by hiring it out to lead a life of indolent independence, and it was used in this way to such an extent that the Abbot of Cong, feeling the shame which such practices brought on his church, by a stretch of clerical power forcibly possessed himself of the miracle-working relic, and consigned its vagrant owners to a more laborious and reputable life."

The shrine afterwards came into the possession of the Blake family, who preserved it at Blake Hall, near Cong, whence it was removed to Menlough, to the care of a member of the same family, who bequeathed it to Dr. Stokes of Dublin, by whom it has been deposited in the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy.

THE SHRINE OF ST. PATRICK'S HAND.



REMARKABLY curious and interesting reliquary, long known by the popular name of the "Hand of St. Patrick," was for many years preserved in the Barony of Ardes, near Portaferry, in the County of Down, in the house of a farmer named McHenry. It is a shrine of massive silver, and antique workmanship, and represents the hand and arm of an ecclesiastic of rank, covered with the embroidered drapery of a sleeve, and wearing a jewelled glove. It is set, around the wrist, and at its termination about the elbow, with a considerable number of precious stones, whose varied colour and size add not a little to the beauty of its elaborate embossed workmanship. It has recently passed into the custody of the late Right Rev. Doctor Denvir, Roman Catholic Bishop of the Diocese of Down and Connor. The expenditure, both of skill and material, as well as the beauty exhibited in the general design of the

reliquary, all indicating most unquestionably the high degree of estimation in which its contents were held. The only inscription to be seen on any part of it consists of the sacred monogram, **I.H.S.**, engraved upon the plate by which the lower end of the shrine is closed. The form of the letters does not indicate an age of more remote period than a few centuries, and offers little aid in determining the time at which the shrine was made. Two of the fingers of the hand are closed, but the two forefingers and thumb are represented as in the position in which the benediction is given by a bishop when he turns to the people for that purpose. Jewelled gloves were a distinguishing mark in ancient times of the high rank of the wearer. The monumental effigies of many monarchs and ecclesiastics afford evidence of the fact. That of Henry II. in his tomb in the Abbey of Fontevraud, in Normandy, may be adduced among many others, as an example.

The legend of the dispute respecting the burial-place of St. Patrick—as to whether it was at Armagh or Downpatrick, terminated by his thrusting his arm above ground at the latter place, when, with irreverent

temerity, it was severed by some sacrilegious bystander—is scarce worth recording. A more consistent account, and one which has been handed down upon authority, entitling it to higher consideration, is that about the close of the 12th century Cardinal Vivian translated the bodies of SS. Patrick, Brigid, and Columbkille, from the grave in which they had been interred in Downpatrick into the interior of the cathedral then founded there, and that he set apart, to take with him to Rome in obedience to the commands of Pope Urban III., considerable portions of their relics, having previously enshrined others: among these latter was the hand in question, which was then placed in the tabernacle upon the great altar of the cathedral at Down. The earliest narrative of this transaction is that given by Giraldus Cambrensis in the following words:—

“Contemporary with Patrick were also St. Columba and St. Brigid; and the bodies of these three were interred in Ulster, in the same place, namely, in the city of Down. Where, within our own time, that is, in the year in which the Lord, Earl John, first came

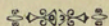
into Ireland, they were found as it were, in a triple tomb, Patrick lying in the middle, and the others, one at either side. The reliques of these three renowned persons having, by divine revelation, been discovered, were translated, under the superintendence of John de Curci, then governor of that province. And hence arose the verse:—

In the fortress of Down were buried
In the same tomb Brigid, Patrick,
and the pious Columba.”

At the time of the translation of the relics of SS. Patrick, Bridget, and Columbkille, in the twelfth century, under the auspices of Cardinal Vivian, the hand of St. Patrick was enshrined, and placed upon the high altar of the abbey church in Downpatrick. When Edward Bruce, during his invasion of Ireland, plundered this abbey church, this relic was carried off and entrusted to the care of some persons who accompanied the army. On the defeat of that prince at Dundalk, in 1318, the person who had charge of it escaped out of the battle, and afterwards for greater security, it was given to one of the Magennis family, the head of which

had about this time obtained the title of Lord of Iveagh.

Within the memory of persons now living, it was commonly carried about to various parts of the country, by persons who borrowed it for the purpose of enabling others to clear themselves from the suspicion of various accusations, and who took an oath for this purpose upon the reliquary, in the manner not unusual in early periods of history, by way of giving the greater solemnity to their asseverations. Extra-judicial trials were thus often held, which bore a curious analogy to the Saxon *corsned*, spoken of by Sir William Blackstone, and explained by Spelman and Du Cange to have been a test of guilt or innocence, to which suspected persons were subjected from a very remote period.



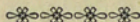
THE BELL AND SHRINE OF ST. PATRICK.

THE iron Bell of St. Patrick is at once the most authentic and the oldest Irish relic of Christian metal-work that has descended to us. It possesses the singular merit of having an unbroken history through fourteen hundred years. The bell is quadrilateral, and is formed of two plates of sheet-iron, which are bent over so as to meet, and are fastened together by large-headed iron rivets. The corners are rounded by a gentle inclination of the parts which join. One of the plates constitutes the face, the crown, and upper third of the back, as well as the adjacent portion of each side, being doubled over at the top, and descending to meet the smaller plate, which overlaps it at the junction. Subsequently to the securing the joints by rivets, the iron frame was consolidated by the fusion of bronze into the joints and over the surface, giving to the whole a metallic solidity, which very much enhanced its resonance, as well as contributed to its preservation. The

inside also was coated with bronze, though more irregularly than the outside, owing to the unevenness of the surface; and the coating seems to have been effected by the dipping of the iron shell into a vessel of the fused metallic compound, a process which has been employed to a recent date in the manufacture of the Wiltshire sheep-bells. The handle is of iron, let in by projecting spikes to perforations on the ridge of the bell, and further secured on the outside by bronze attachments of its straps.

One remarkable fact in connection with the reliquary in which this bell was enshrined is, that since it was made about the year 1091, it has never been lost sight of. From the beginning it had a special keeper; in succeeding generations its custody was continued in the same family, and proved to them a source of considerable emolument; and in after ages, when its profits ceased to accrue, long associations so bound it up with the affections of the keeper's family that they almost held their existence upon the tenure of its safe custody, and thus handed it down from generation to generation, till

the stock at last became extinct, and the object of their former care passed into a keeping established by friendship instead of blood. It was one proof of the fact that these little iron hand-bells of the first teachers of Christianity were among the relics held in highest estimation among the Irish. These, when worn and useless, as in the case of this bell of the great apostle of Ireland, were enshrined in cases made in the form of the bell, and adorned with gold and precious stones ; and, as in the case of the book-shrines, also probably executed about 400 or 500 years after the death of the saint to whom the bell belonged. This rude bell is a fair example of the type which seems to have also prevailed in Wales and Scotland during the first centuries after the introduction of Christianity.



THE SHRINE OF ST. MOLAISE.

ON the Island of Devenish, situated in Lough Erne, in the County of Fermanagh, a church was founded about the middle of the sixth century, by St. Molaise. It is stated in the life of Ciaran of Cluain that the order of Molaise was one of the eight orders that were in Erin, and that after completing thirty years Molaise went to heaven, A.D. 563. His memory is venerated on the 12th September in the Martyrology, where Oengus says, "With the feast of Laisrén the beautiful, of multitudinous Daim-Inis," and on the 15th of the same month at his birthplace, Bellagh-Meehan, in the parish of Rossinver, and County of Leitrim. The monastery, founded by this Saint, continued to be a place of some importance down to the fifteenth century, and the deaths of several of its abbots and learned men are recorded by the Annalists. The remains still existing of this monastery, besides the inscribed book-shrine now to be noticed, are the

great round tower or belfry, and an abbey church. A stone coffin, now exposed, in the neighbourhood, is called the Saint's bed, and his cell still stands as a beautiful example of ancient masonry.

The age of this case may be held to be about 868 years, for the inscription proves that it was executed under the direction of the Abbot Cennfailad, comarb or heir of Molaise; and in the *Annals of Ulster* we read, A.D. 1025, Cennfaeladh, son of Flaithbertach, Airchinnech of Daimhinis, fell asleep in Christ. The Four Masters, under the same year, have Cennfaoladh, son of Flaithbertach, successor of Molaise, of Daimhinis, died. Airchinnech of Daimhinis signifies "Superior of Devenish," and as such Cennfailad was successor of Molaise, its founder and patron Saint.

Cennfailad appears to have succeeded Cathalan Ua Corcraín as abbot, who died in the year 1001; it may then be held that this case was made within the fourteen years which intervened to the death of Cennfailad. The following inscription runs along three sides of the lower part of the box, made to enshrine

the copy of the Gospels said to have belonged to St. Molaise :—

✠Or Do [Cin]nfailad Do Chomarbu Molasi Lasan . . .
[Dernad] In Cumtachsa Do . . ✠Ocus

Do Gillubaithin Cherd Dorigni [In Gressa]

(Pray for Cennfaelad for the successor of Molaise,
by whom this case [was made] . . .

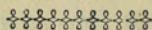
and for Gillabaithin, the artisan who made the . . .)

There is a legend that this copy was made by the sons of one Declan, who were ordered by Molaise to write for him a Soscel (Só-scél, which means *bonus nuntius*), which they did in the space of two days and one night, the light of the sun illuminating the night through the grace of the Saint. This case is formed of plates of bronze and is oblong in shape. On the face of the box the four evangelistic symbols were represented, with a cross surrounded by a circle in the centre. The name of each symbol and its accompanying evangelist appears at the sides of the figures. Leo, Aquila, Ho(mo), Marc, Johan, Math, can still be deciphered. On one side may be seen the figure of an ecclesiastic, habited and holding a book to his breast, probably St. Molaise bearing his Gospels.

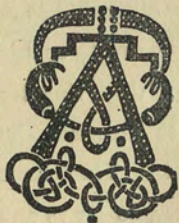
For many centuries this cumdach was preserved in the sanctuary of St. Molaise, and the Irish Annals occasionally record the names of members of the family who became its hereditary keepers—the O'Mithidein or Meehans—styling one, “Comarb of Molaise,” A.D. 1336, and another in 1437, while a third was “Comarb of the Ballagh,” A.D. 1419.

About twenty years ago, Charles Meehan, of Latone, in the Ballagh, purchased the case for a small sum from a kinsman, and on the 30th of April, 1859, it was borrowed by Lord Adare, who first met with it in Sligo, in the year 1843. This cumdach is now preserved in the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy, where it was deposited in 1860.

The foregoing information has been gathered from *Christian Inscriptions in the Irish Language*, Vol. ii. By Geo. Petrie, LL.D.



THE SHRINE OF ST. LACTIN'S ARM.



MOST elaborately ornamented shrine, composed of brass and silver, of exquisite workmanship, covered with interlaced tracery and knots, in the peculiar style known to archæologists by the term of *Opus Hibernicum*, was lately brought to Ireland, and exhibited, through the intervention of Lord Talbot de Malahide, who obtained the loan of it from its present possessor, Andrew Fontaine, Esq., of Norfolk Hall, Norfolk, in whose family it has been for many years. This reliquary represents a human arm with closed hand, and is believed to contain portions of the hand or arm of St. Lachtin, Abbot or Bishop of Achadh-ur, a place now called Freshford, in the County of Kilkenny. He was a native of Muskerry, in the County of Cork ; he died, according to the *Annals of the Four Masters*, A.D. 622, and his memory was venerated by the Irish Church on the 19th March.

There are four inscriptions, in the old Irish character, on plates of brass, running longitudinally down the arm ; of these but one is perfect ; the other three are illegible at the end, but enough still remains to enable us to fix with certainty the date of this singular specimen of ancient Irish art, and to ascertain the part of Ireland in which it was made. They have been deciphered by Mr. Eugene Curry, so far as any traces of the letters still remain, and are as follows:—

The first inscription reads :

“A prayer for Maelseachnaill O’Callaghan, chief King of Ua [Echach Mumhain] who made this reliquary.”

The words enclosed in brackets are not very distinct in the inscription, and are in some degree conjectural, supplied from knowledge of the fact that this personage was lord of this district ; and confirmed by observing, that the space left doubtful by the obliteration of the words in the original exactly agrees with what would be required for the words supplied. Maelseachnaill O’Callaghan died, according to the Four Masters, in 1121.

The second inscription reads :

“A prayer for Cormac, the son of MacCarthy, Righdamhna [or next heir] of Munster who gave . . .”

This was the Cormac who was King-bishop of Ireland, as he is called by the Four Masters, and who built the celebrated “Cormac’s Chapel” on the rock of Cashel. The Four Masters mention him, at the year 1137, as having made a predatory excursion against Kennedy O’Brien and the foreigners or Danes of Limerick ; and in the following year they record his treacherous murder, by Toirdhealbhach (or Turlogh), son of Diarmaid O’Brien, and the two sons of O’Connor Kerry. They speak of him as celebrated “for bestowing of jewels and wealth upon the clergy and the churches, an improver of territories and churches”—so that it is in strict accordance with this character, to find his name on the richly ornamented reliquary now described.

The third inscription reads :

“A prayer for Tadgh, son of MacCarthy, Righ [damhna of Munster]”

The letters Rig are probably the commencement of

Rig-Damna Mumhain, a title which belonged to this Tadhg, grandson of Carthy, who was brother of Cormac already spoken of.

The fourth inscription reads :

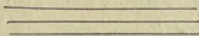
“A prayer for Diarmait, son of MacDenisc, Comharb of L”

It is greatly to be regretted that the next word is not legible, as it would probably have given us the name of the Saint whose reliques were contained in this reliquary. The first letter seems to be L, in which case it was probably Lachtin.

These inscriptions, though imperfect, afford a tolerably exact date to this ancient piece of art, which, even in its present dilapidated state, exhibits great evidence of the workman's skill in inlaying and minute ornamentation of the most elaborate kind. It is clear that it must have been made before the death of Maelseachnail O'Callaghan, who is stated in the first inscription to have made it, or caused it to have been made; and, as he died in 1121, it is certain that we have in this exquisitely beautiful shrine, a specimen of what could be done by Irish artists, in inlaying and

jewellery, within the first twenty years of the twelfth century.

The practice of enshrining the hand and the arm of ecclesiastics distinguished for their eminent piety and devotion prevailed also to a considerable extent upon the Continent ; and there can be little doubt, that the researches of archæologists, prosecuted there, will yet add considerably to those alluded to here.



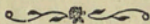
LOUGH ERNE SHRINE.

IN the summer of 1891 some fishermen were engaged in plying their trade in the waters of Lower Lough Erne, about midway between Enniskillen and Belleek. There, on the western side of the lake, is a small bay ; close by, on a projecting point, are the remains of a stone structure surrounded by a square fosse which encloses about 20 perches of ground. Possibly this was the site of the religious house to which the shrine, found close by, belonged. All tradition about it seems to have died out ; if, indeed, it

ever existed. One of the fishermen hooked a fish ; it went to the bottom of the deep water and remained there for some time, moving about when stirred by the gentle pressure of the hook. Somehow the line got entangled in something ; and when the fish was drawn to the surface this very strange old shrine was found knotted into the line. They were both safely landed.

It consists of two distinct parts, an inner shrine and an outer shell. The inner shrine is very plain, very probably it is the older part. The sides, roof, and the lower part of the two ends still remain. There is no ornament on any part of it, nor any mark or opening to show that anything of the kind was ever attached to it ; it has, however, at each end an ansa or a portion of one not unlike one half of a hinge. The outer shell has a lining of yew-wood ; this lining serves as a backing for the plaques of metal forming the outer shell ; the greater part of the exterior is without any ornament ; but clearly this was not its original state, for there is on one side of the roof a highly decorated boss, which remains of probably

six, as we may fairly infer from the fact that on the opposite side of the roof at the corresponding part there is a hole through which such another would be fastened on, and below on both sides there are evident remains of four others. The interlacing on this boss is of the very highest type of ancient Irish art,



THE SHRINE OF THE BOOK OF DIMMA.



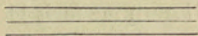
THE "Book of Dimma" contains a copy of the Gospels, said to have been written in the seventh century. It contains the scribe's autograph at the end of the Gospel of St. Matthew :

Oroit do Dimma rod scrib pro Deo et benedictione.

A prayer for Dimma, who wrote it for God and a blessing.

This Dimma was believed to have been the scribe mentioned in the *Life of St. Cronan* who lived A.D. 634, as employed by him to write a copy of the Gospels. The book belonged to the Abbey of Roscrea, founded by Cronan. It was enshrined in the middle of the twelfth century by order of Tatheus O'Carroll, chieftain of Ely O'Carroll. The shrine, with its precious enclosure, disappeared at the time of the dissolution of monasteries. It was found by boys hunting rabbits, in the year 1789, among the rocks

of the Devil's Bit Mountain, in the County of Tipperary, carefully preserved and concealed. The boys who discovered it tore off the silver plate, and picked out some of the lapis-lazuli with which it was studded. They feared to touch the side of the shrine, on which they found the representation of the Passion. It then came into the possession of Dr. Harrison of Nenagh, and having passed through the hands of Mr. Monck Mason, and Sir William Betham, and Dr. Todd, was finally purchased for the Library of Trinity College, Dublin.



THE KAVANAGH CHARTER HORN.

FROM a very early period in England, even before the arrival of the Normans, it was not unusual to transfer inheritances by the gift of some implement that was well known to have belonged to the donor or grantor, and this, too, *sine scriptis*, or without writing or charter, but simply by word of mouth ; the lands

thus held were either in frank almoign, or in fee, or in sergeanty.

I present my readers with a representation of one of the same kind now preserved in the Museum of Trinity College, to which it was presented by Kavanagh of Borris, the lineal descendant of the last King of Leinster.

Our Irish horn in its size and general appearance is not unlike some of those preserved in England. It is of ivory, has sixteen sides and is mounted with brass, indifferently gilt. Round the mouthpiece is the following inscription in Gothic letters :

Tiguranus O'Lavan me fecit Deo gracias, iho
That is, "Tiguranus (Tigeran) O'Lavan made me for the love of God."

This horn has been usually called the Charter Horn ; but on what evidence we cannot say, for nothing is known of its history. From the inscription it appears to have belonged originally to the Laffan family, which was of great respectability in the Counties of Kilkenny and Tipperary, and its use was evidently that of a drinking cup.

CROZIERS.

THE CROZIER OF CORMAC McCARTHY was discovered in the tomb of Cormac, King and Bishop of Munster in the chapel bearing his name at Cashel, A.D. 1135.

The only part of the original of this crozier which, from the durability of its material, now remains, is the head or crook (the staff having been made of wood). This head is formed of copper, and measures twelve inches in length, and five in the diameter of the crook or circular head. The crook or upper portion of the crozier represents a serpent, terminated by a double-faced head; its surface is covered with a sunk lozenge-shaped carving, filled with a vitreous enamel of a blue colour, and the intervening elevations of which are gilt—a design obviously intended to represent the scales of a reptile; immediately above the bowl and encircling the upper portion of the staff is an ornament resembling the Irish Crown.

Independently of any other consideration this crozier is of the highest interest as a specimen of the ancient art of Ireland and may perhaps, as a work of

art, challenge a comparison with any Christian monument of the same class and age now remaining in Europe.

THE CROZIER OF THE ABBOTS OF CLONMACNOISE is a staff, the head of which is made of bronze, and the central knob is inlaid with silver, the upper and lower knobs having several jewelled settings.

THE CROZIER OF ST. MURUS OF FAHAN, Co. Donegal, is a work of the sixth century, and is made of bronze with jewel settings, the central knob being inlaid with silver.

THE CROZIER OF ST. NAAL OR MONALACH OF DYSART is made of an imperfect bronze, and carries us back as far as the fifth century. It was obtained from its hereditary keeper.

THE CROZIER OF ST. BERACH OF BARRY OF TERMONBARRY, Co. Roscommon, known as "Gearr Berach," supposed to be the work of the Irish artificer St. Dagaeus, is a relic of the sixth century.

These five ancient croziers are all in the possession of the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin.

THE ARDAGH CUP.

The following description of the Ardagh Cup or Chalice is copied from "The Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy." Volume xxiv., Part ix.



N the parish, and close to the village of Ardagh, in the County of Limerick, there is a rath, called Reerasta. This rath is of the usual character and average size, its internal diameter being about fifty-seven yards. It is situated on a farm held by a widow of the name of Quin, and has been partly levelled for the purpose of tillage. She has for many years been under the impression that gold in large quantities was secreted somewhere within its precincts.

She says that about twenty years ago, while tilling the ground, a beautiful chalice of gold was turned up about fifty yards west of the fort. Upon inquiring what became of it, she asserts that one day her children took it out of the house to play with, and that she never saw it again.

Towards the end of September, 1868, her son was digging potatoes in the fort at the south-western side.

On reaching the base of the bank, and close to a thorn bush, he found the surface soft: he drove the spade down between the roots of the thorn and felt it strike against something hard like metal.

While clearing the earth and roots to see what this could be, he thrust down his hand, and laid hold of the long pin of a fibula. He then excavated to the depth of about three feet, and found a most beautiful cup laid in the earth, with a rough flagstone on one side of it, and inside the cup was a smaller cup and four fibulæ. The small cup was the only article broken by the stroke of the spade.

Excavations have since been made in the immediate vicinity of the spot where these articles were found, but nothing has turned up.

This magnificent cup, which combines classic beauty of form with the most exquisite examples of almost every variety of Celtic ornamentation, is composed of an alloy of silver, which may be stated generally as about three parts of silver to one of copper.

By the permission of the Right Rev. Dr. Butler, the then possessor of the precious object, it was repaired

and cleaned by Mr. Johnson of Dublin, by whose judicious treatment some idea of the original appearance of this exquisite vessel was given. No portion which was lost has been supplied: the work was strictly confined to cleaning and reparation and was executed with the most scrupulous fidelity. When the cup was brought to Dublin, the inscription was almost entirely illegible; and it was impossible to make out some of the exquisite details of the ornamentation until the whole had been subjected to a thorough examination and cleaning.

In his paper before the Royal Irish Academy Lord Dunraven says:—

Mr. Johnson gives the following technical description of the cup:—

“This cup is composed of the following metals:—gold, silver, bronze, brass, copper and lead. The upper rim is of brass, much decayed and split, from some local action on that particular alloy of metal. The bowl is of silver, the ornaments cut on the silver bowl consist of an inscription, interlaced patterns terminating in dogs’ heads, and at the bottom a

circular band of the Greek pattern. The mode of ornamentation is peculiar to this cup, being done with a chisel and a hammer, as indicated by the lines being raised at each side, which could only be produced in the manner described. Round the cup runs a band composed of two semi-cylindrical rings of silver, ornamented with small annular dots, punched out with a hollow punch. The space between the rings is filled by twelve plaques of gold repoussé work, with a very beautiful ornamentation of fine filigree wire work wrought on the front of the repoussé ground, and carrying out, in its most delicate execution, the interlaced pattern associated with the art of this country. Between the plaques are twelve round enamelled beads. The handles are ornamented with enamels (similar to those in the borders) and plaques of gold filigree work of the same style, but different in design. Each handle has four circular pieces of blue enamel, underneath which the rivets are secured which fasten the handles to the bowl. Round the enamels was a circle of amber, divided into eight spaces by pieces of bronze, which has been eaten away. One of the

enamels has a circle of gold grains at the top, which has been pressed in while the glass was in fusion. The two circular ornaments on the sides of the bowl are of gold filigree work of the very finest kind, with an enamelled boss in the centre; the frames which hold them are of silver. There are four settings at equal distances, which are receivers of the rivets that secure it to the bowl. In the settings were two pieces of blue glass (the same as in the handles), and two pieces of amber, which have fallen out.

“The stem and supports of the bowl are of bronze metal, gilt, beautifully carved in interlaced and knotted patterns. They are attached to the bowl by a bronze gilt ball, with a strong square tang, and most ingeniously fastened by an iron bolt, which secures all together.

“The foot is of silver, circular, with a frame work on the outer rim, having eight spaces, which are filled alternately with gold and bronze gilt plaques of open work; behind them pieces of mica are inserted, which throw out more clearly the very beautiful pierced designs with which these plaques are ornamented. The intermediate spaces contain enamels (inferior

to those in the upper part of the bowl) set in bronze.

“In the inside of the foot of the bowl is a circular crystal, round which there has been a circle of amber, divided into twelve tablets, with a bronze division between each tablet; surrounding this is a circle in gold filigree of the same style and workmanship as those already described. The next circle has tablets of amber, but they have all fallen out. In the space between this and the silver is a circular bronze plate, highly carved and gilt, in which are fine enamels in green.

“The extreme outer edge, like the reverse side, is divided into eight spaces, in which are pieces somewhat similar to the gold plaques at the opposite side with this difference, that six are in silver, and two in copper; two of the silver pieces are of the most beautiful plaited wire work I have ever met with.

“Between those spaces are square pieces of blue glass, underneath which are ornamented pieces of wrought silver, which give them a brilliant appearance when in strong light. Between the circles which form

the upper and under surfaces of the rim of the feet are plates of lead to secure and give weight to the whole. The enamels on the foot of the cup are of a coarse kind, the pattern being impressed in the glass, and the enamel melted into it. The number of pieces of which the cup is composed amounts to 354, including 20 rivets.

"The analysis of the different metals gives as follows :—

Gold between 18 and 19 carat fine, value per ounce £3 4s. od.

Silver, bad quality.

Lead has 12 grains of silver in the lb. Troy.

Bronze has 2 grs. of silver in the lb. Troy, a small portion of tin, and the balance in copper.

GOLD ASSAY—

	oz.	dwt.			dwt.	grs
Fine gold in the lb.,	8	16,	or in each oz. there is,	Fine gold,	14	16
Fine silver	2	16	"	Fine silver,	4	16
Copper	0	8	"	Copper,	0	16
	12	0			20	0

SILVER ASSAY--

Of the rivets at the handles, 4 oz. 9 dwts. worse in the lb.	s. d.
Troy, standard value, ...	1 3 per oz.
Of the setting round the borders, 6 dwts. better in lb. Troy,	
standard value, ...	3 3½ "
Of the piece of the border that encircles the bowl, 3 oz.	
worse, standard value, ...	2 0 "
Of the small setting on the handle, 4 oz. worse, standard	
value, ...	1 5½ "

"Underneath the boss which fastens the bowl to the stand there was a very slight trace of oil in the bottom of the bowl."

The ornamental designs upon this cup belong to the Celtic school of art, which, according to Dr. Petrie, reached its highest perfection as regards metal work in this country in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Of these designs there are about forty different varieties, all showing a freedom of inventive power and play of fancy only to be equalled by the work upon the Tara brooch.

The most interesting, as well as the most remarkable feature of the cup, is the inscription. The letters are rather more than half an inch in length, and are beautifully preserved, though the lines are very delicate and the outline faint. Their shape is clearly marked out by the stippling, which forms a shaded background to them.

The inscription runs thus :—

Petri, Pauli, Andri, Jacobi, Johannis,
 Piliphi, Bartholomei, Thomæ, Mathei,
 Jacobi, Tatheus, Simon.

The cup is now in the Science and Art Museum, Dublin.

TORQUES.

IN Irish, "Torc" is a term applied to a ring of twisted metal, generally gold, worn either on the neck, round the waist, across the breast, or on the limbs as an armilla or finger ring. The simplest form is that of a square bar of gold twisted so as to present a rope-like figure. In the more complex forms, two or more flat strips of metal joined at their inner edges are twisted together spirally; the name is expressive of the form. Decorative articles of this description seemed to have belonged to the Irish Celt as a special and frequent form of decoration. They are frequently mentioned in our early Irish histories, and more golden torques have been discovered in Ireland, and are to be seen in more varieties and of greater magnitude in the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy than in the collections of all the other countries of Europe collectively.

Two magnificent torques, the largest in above collection, were found by a peasant boy in 1810 in the side of one of the clay raths at Tara, near the monu-

ments of the Druids, Mael Blocc and Bluicne ; they were brought for exhibition to St. Petersburg by the Russian ambassador, and afterwards disposed of to the Duke of Sussex, and finally found their way into the possession of the Royal Irish Academy, where, with a few other articles remaining from the foundation of the institution, and the Cross of Cong, they formed the nucleus of the present collection.

The waist torque, evidently too large for the neck and too small to be worn across the breast ; the ends are not prolonged and do not stand out like those of the breast torques, but terminate in simple hooks. Another description of torque, evidently from its size a "neck-ring," "Muin-torc" or "Muinche," consists of a simple flat strip or band of gold, the breadth of a piece of ordinary tape, loosely twisted and having generally small hooked extremities which loop into one another. While most of these neck-torques are so light, elegant and fragile, as only to be found in fragments, others are solid, perfectly plain, either round or flat in section, and oval in form.

Although the use and mode of application of the

flexible twisted bands or neck-torques, is so apparent as to leave no room for speculation, the manner of wearing the thick heavy gold twisted ring with wide spread ends is not so manifest. A very fine specimen of this latter was found in May, 1841, near Aughrim, in the neighbourhood of Ballinasloe, County Galway.

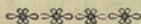
Besides the various uses to which the golden torque of Ireland was applied, it was probably also worn on the head or for binding up the hair, in which position it may have been an emblem of royalty or power.

It is related in the *Book of Ballymote* that when Cormac Mac Art reigned at Tara he wore a fine purple garment, had a golden brooch on his breast, and a "muin-torc" or collar of gold around his neck and a belt adorned with precious stones about him.

In that part of the *Life of St. Brendan of Clonfert*, referring to his visit to the monks of Meath, we read that Dermot MacCerrbheoil, the last resident King of Tara, saw in a dream two angels who took his torque from his neck and gave it to a stranger. When the king saw St. Brendan he exclaimed : "This is the man to whom the angels gave my torque." The dream was

interpreted by the sages that his kingdom should pass away from him and become the inheritance of clerics.

Keating in his ancient Irish history says : “ At this time there was a ‘Fleasc’ or bracelet on the arm of every chieftain as a mark of dignity as leader of a sept ; and hence at this day the head of a tribe is called in Irish ‘Fleascach Uasal.’ ” The same Irish historian states that in the chivalrous days of the Knights of the Red Branch and the renowned Queen Maive of Connaught—the times of the “Tain Bo Cuailnge” or great cattle-raid of Ulster—“ It was the custom as an inducement to champions to behave valiantly in the fight to give the badge of heroes as a mark of victory to him who shewed himself the bravest in single combat and who vanquished his adversary in the field of valour ; ” and, adds the translator in a note, “ it was some ornament or mark of merit, like the medals or ribbands of modern times.”



ARMILLÆ OR BRACELETS,

IN Irish "Failge Oir," are of two kinds : perfect rings either plain or twisted, of rare occurrence ; and penannular or unclosed rings, for apparently a like use.

During the period of the Danish invasions, and the partial rule held by that people in certain parts of Ireland our annals and histories record many plunderings by the Northmen, in which large quantities of gold were carried off. But, with the exception of some iron swords, spears, and a few other implements of war chiefly found in the city of Dublin and its immediate neighbourhood, we have not yet met with any antiquities which would appear to have belonged to that people. Neither do the collections of Denmark, Norway, or Sweden, except in very few instances, contain any articles that can with certainty be termed Irish. If our gold was carried by the Northern invaders to their own country (when they had no native gold of their own) it was probably remelted for the purposes of Scandinavian jewellery. A very fine specimen of this ornament which particularly bears the impress of Scandinavian

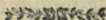
art was recently found near Clonmacnoise in the King's County, along with a twisted neck torque, which consists of a hollow ring $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, with a hollow decorated bulb on one side, and on the other a spiral enlargement, each with an embossed pattern differing altogether from the style of ornament observed in any of the golden ornaments of native origin. A number of unclosed "Armillaë" of different shapes, patterns and styles of ornament, but all bearing an amount of affinity to the original type, have been discovered in great quantity at different times in Ireland; they have been found singly or in hoards, and in some instances were crushed together as if hidden in haste. The frequent mention in our early histories of royal personages having bestowed rings of gold on poets, bards, philosophers, and warriors, and the number of cases in which tribute was paid in similar ornaments is confirmed by the many instances in which such articles are found throughout the country in the present day.

It is related that in the early part of the first century the wife of Nuadha Necht, the Poet-King of Leinster,

who gave her name of Boann to the River Boyne, used to have her arms covered with rings of gold for bestowal on poets and men of learning.

This royal personage of poetry and history affords one of the many reasons to account for the amount and state of preservation of our domestic annals.

It may be seen by a careful inspection of the specimens how these Armillæ vary from the simple unclosed ring, evidently used as an armlet, to a wide spread fibula with broad, shallow or saucer-shaped extremities, and dish-shaped terminations, enlarged and expanded, until it is manifest that the article was applied to another purpose, and became a fastener and not a bracelet. But the transition is so gradual that it is difficult to decide where the armilla ends and the brooch or fibula commences.



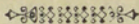
MAMMILLARY FIBULÆ.

FOR the sake of distinction and arrangement this term is applied to a class of gold ornaments of great diversity of size, found in abundance in Ireland and of unquestionable antiquity. Various have been the conjectures respecting the uses of gold ornaments of this description, but an examination of kindred articles in bronze, preserved in the Museums in Copenhagen and Mayence sets the question at rest. They were fibulæ or brooches, in the fastening of which a portion of the soft woollen cloak or mantle passed in between the cups or discs into the space under the handle and was then fastened by means of an "acus" or pin, temporarily affixed to one side of the handle where it joins the cup. In some instances the ends of the pin were bifid and clasped round the handle by means of a spring, in other instances the pin was fixed by means of an enclosed ring, attached to one extremity. In wearing it is very possible that the pin was first passed through the dress and then adjusted to the brooch by means of its spring or open ring; but by

what other devices these ornaments were held in position we have now no means of determining.

Within the last 35 years a remarkably fine specimen was found near Keeper Mountain, County Tipperary, by some peasants, and hundreds of these enclosed hoops with terminal cups have been found in Ireland from time to time, especially in the County Clare.

The variety of this class of ornament having the discs perfectly flat, thin and plain, and the solid connecting bow or handle invariably highly decorated with longitudinal groovings, has on the external face of one of the discs a small loop, possibly for the purpose of attaching a pin or string to. This fact strengthens the conjecture already expressed as to the object and use of these articles.



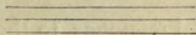
GORGETS.



GORGETS or Neckcollars.—While the precise use and mode of wearing the lunulæ or moon-shaped plates are questions still open to discussion, no doubt can exist as to the object of the articles termed “Gorget,” for an exactly similar piece of decorative defence was worn by modern soldiers within the last few years. Indeed, it may be fairly asserted that no article of ancient personal decoration has descended to our own time with less alteration than this, and even when no longer considered useful for defence, small figurative or emblematic gorgets of gilt brass were suspended by ribbons from the necks of infantry officers. It is only within the last few years that any of these ancient gorgets have been discovered, and as yet the only specimens to be seen in public antiquarian museums in Europe are those in the Royal Irish Academy collection. They were all found together in 1854, with a vast number of golden antiquities in making the Limerick and Ennis

Railway, near Quin, and not far from Newmarket-on-Fergus, in the County of Clare, and form part of the great "Clare find." It is said that no less than £30,000 worth of gold articles were discovered on that occasion.

The discovery of these undoubted gorgets or neck-collars strengthens our belief that the "lunulæ" were intended for the head.



LUNULÆ OR LUNETTES.

(WORN BY QUEENS AND LADIES OF RANK.)

IN Irish "Mind" or "Minn." The most frequently discovered gold ornament—and that in which the type both in shape, size, and style of decoration is most decidedly fixed—is a thin crescentic or moon-shaped plate, with the extremities formed into small flat circular discs at right angles with the plane of the article, and which is now known by the name of "lunula."

In the absence of any distinct reference in Irish history to these crescentic or moon-shaped ornaments,

the mode in which they were worn is still a subject of discussion amongst antiquaries, some asserting that they were hung around the neck like gorgets ; while others, with more apparent reason, believe that they were placed upright on the head, with the flat terminal plates applied behind the ears. In this latter position they would be more ostensible and attractive than if suspended round the neck, for which there were other decorations in the shape of gorgets and torques. We have no special reference to these ornaments in Irish history ; but in the " Vision of Adamnan " there is a passage that bears upon such a form of head-dress, where it refers to the exceedingly large arch above the head of the " Illustrious One " in his regal chair like the adorned helmet or the " Mind of a King." In one of the MS. copies of " Cormac's Glossary " the article referred to is thus explained :—" A ' mind ' that used to be put upon the head of a soldier after a victory."

A few bronze lunulæ have been found in Scandinavia, and the northern antiquaries consider them to have been ornaments for confining the hair.

DIADEMS—"MIND" OR "MINN"

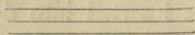
(WORN BY THE ANCIENT KINGS.)

THESE ornaments both for design and execution are undoubtedly the most gorgeous and magnificent specimens of antique gold work which have as yet been discovered in any part of the world. Whether they were worn as the insignia of royalty or formed portions of the head-dresses of Druid priests in Pagan times is in the present state of our knowledge undetermined. The general design is the same in all, but differing slightly in the ornamental details in each specimen. Each diadem consists of a central crescentic plate, wide at top, and narrowing towards the ends, which are inserted into decorated circular bosses, and appear to have been placed in the erect position on the top of the head with the terminal decorated extremities coming down on each side in front of and partially covering the ears. How retained in position is uncertain.

The first article of this description of which we have any notice is the grand diadem figured by General

Vallancey in his *Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis*, and which he supposed to be the celebrated collar of judgment worn by the renowned Brehon Morann in the reign of King Fearadach Finnfeachnach, who, according to the historian Keating, reigned A.D. 14. It is said to have possessed the miraculous power of closing on the neck of the judge, if he pronounced an unrighteous sentence; or on that of the witness if he swore falsely. This so-called "Jodhan Morain" was found 12 feet deep in a bog in the County Limerick.

The only specimens of this class of ornament that have been found are in possession of the Royal Irish Academy.



ST. PATRICK'S CROSS.

THE original "St. Patrick" crosses worn by the ancient Celtic ecclesiastics as a distinguishing badge of their office were always worn in pairs, one on each shoulder. From several sculptured crosses

throughout Ireland figures are shown of these emblems carved upon them, also on several of our shrines the same ornamentation is introduced on the figures. They have frequently been found in pairs in sizes varying from $1\frac{3}{8}$ to $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches, and from 2 dwts. to 13 dwts. in weight.

A peculiar interest attaches to these articles from the remarkable circumstance related by Bishop Gibson in his edition of *Camden's Britannia* of the discovery of those described by him in 1722. Shortly before that period Dr. Nicholson, Bishop of Derry, when dining at Ballyshannon, was entertained by an Irish harper who sang an old song in Irish to his harp, which detailed the burial in a certain place of a gigantic man adorned with golden ornaments. His lordship not knowing Irish, was at a loss to understand the meaning of the song, but on inquiry found its substance, and the place being so exactly described, that two persons went in quest of the golden prize which the harper's song had pointed out to them. After they had dug for some time they found two thin pieces of gold, circular shaped, like those under con-

sideration; this discovery encouraged them next morning to seek for the remainder, but they could meet with nothing more.

THE BELL OF ARMAGH.

IN the townland of Aughlish, in the parish of Ballymore, and County of Armagh, there is an old churchyard situated near the road leading south-east from Tandragee to Poyntzpass. Aughlish was held under the see of Armagh, and the Herenachs or old hereditary tenants of churchlands bore the name of *Munterheny*, that is, "the family of Heany," by which the parish was sometimes called. These are the people whom, under the name of Hanan or O'Hanan, are stated to have been the keepers of this bell.

The bell bears the following inscription:—

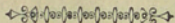
✠ OR an Cumarcach mc Dililla

(Pray for Cumuscach the son of Ailill).

From this it is proved that it belonged to the church of Armagh, and was probably made some

years before the death of the person for whose use it was intended ; we may therefore consider it to be work of the eighth century. It is of a rounded form, much less rude and ancient looking than many quadrangular bells. Its material is bronze ; it has no rivets, and the handle and clapper are made of iron.

This bell was purchased by the Very Rev. Henry Dawson, late Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin, and at his death was presented to the Royal Irish Academy Museum.



THE TARA BROOCH.

(SEE FRONT-PIECE.)



HIS surpassingly beautiful article is superior to any hitherto found in the variety of its ornaments and in the exquisite delicacy and perfection of its execution.

The metal of which this brooch is chiefly composed, was for some time believed to be silver, but this supposition has been found to be erroneous, and that it is, in reality, that harder metal formed by a combination of copper and tin which is called white bronze. A peculiarity of this brooch is the attached chain, which was intended to keep the pin tight and in its proper position. This chain is of that peculiar construction known as Trichinopoli work. The face of the ornament is overlaid with various ornamented patterns of the same class as those found in Irish illuminated MSS., designed with beautiful taste, and which are not confined to the front, but also enrich

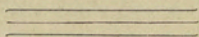
the reverse. A lens of no moderate power is necessary if we would appreciate the perfect execution of these ornaments. There are no less than seventy-six varieties of these designs, all of which exhibit an admirable sense of ornamental beauty and happy fitness for their relative situations; in the fastening used to keep these delicate tracteries in their places only a small bar, scarcely perceptible to the naked eye, is found. In other places, however, and particularly in the circular insertions of amber, the gold rosettes placed upon them are fastened by pins, which pass through the brooch, and are rivetted also on the opposite side.

It should be observed that insertions of amber and variegated glass are frequently found in the jewellery of early Christian Ireland. Niello-work of exquisite beauty is also to be met with; but of this and the carving and casting of glass into the forms of human faces, such as is here seen, we have no other example among the personal ornaments hitherto found in Ireland.

The purchase of this beautiful relic is rather

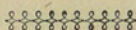
singular. On the 24th of August, 1850, a poor woman who stated that her children had picked it up near the sea, offered it for sale to the proprietor of an old iron shop in Drogheda, who refused to purchase so light and insignificant an article. It was subsequently bought by a watchmaker in the town, who, after cleaning and examining it, proceeded to Dublin and disposed of it for nearly as many pounds sterling as he had given pence for it, and after having been exhibited at the International Exhibitions in London, Paris, and Dublin, it was sold a short time ago to the Royal Irish Academy for £200, on the express condition it should never be allowed to leave Ireland. As Dr. Petrie has not treated on the mechanical merit of this ornament, I may observe that the gold wire, of which the inlaid designs and the front are made, and mounted on flat plates of gold, has almost defied the best filigree workers of the present day to account for its manufacture; for, unlike works of art in general, the more highly the brooch is magnified, the more beautifully ingenious the work appears, developing patterns indiscernable to the naked eye. The oriental

or eastern character of this ornament serves to confirm its Irish origin; for, at the time A.D. 432, when Pope Celestine deputed Magonius (St. Patrick) on his mission to Ireland, the arts had taken refuge in Byzantium, and from this source, doubtless, the Saint provided himself with the "two cunning workmen," which, as stated in his life by Lynch, accompanied him to this country for the purpose of manufacturing sacramental plate and other articles in connection with religious ceremonies.



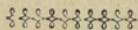
THE QUEEN'S BROOCH.

THE original was found in the County Cavan. It takes its name from the fact of Her Majesty having been presented with a copy of it on her visit to Ireland. Dr. Petrie puts it down as twelfth century work.



THE ARDAGH AND CELTIC BROOCH.

THE workmanship upon these brooches is larger and less delicate in execution than in the Tara brooch, or the chalice in which they were found. They do not exhibit many of the archaic designs found in such variety upon the older specimens, such as the double and divergent spirals, and the fine wire-work resembling Trichinopoli chain-work. This leads to the belief that the brooches found at Ardagh are of a later date than the other antiquities discovered with them.



THE KILKENNY BROOCH.



HIS magnificent brooch was found by a labourer in the parish of Killamory, County Kilkenny, on the yellow clay subsoil beneath the vegetable mould of the field. The material is white metal, parcel gilt on the ornamental portions.

For size, beauty of ornamentation, and bold yet elegant design, this brooch was, perhaps, the finest of the rare class to which it belonged.

On the back of this brooch there is incised an inscription to the following effect:—Οἱ παῖ Οἱ χῖρμας—“A prayer for O’Chirmac.” These characters were inscribed with a pointed tool or graver, and, although partially concealed by oxidation, showed quite clear and sharp when examined by the aid of the magnifying glass, with the exception of the last three letters, the back of the brooch being there much filed or scratched.

Both the character of the letters and the formula of

the inscription would be seen to be as old, at all events, as the year 1050, and the occurrence of the legend proved also that the brooch was in the possession of some person *after* the use of hereditary surnames became prevalent in Ireland, thus establishing the fact that the brooch was *in use* about the middle of the eleventh century.

From the *Journal of the Kilkenny Archæological Society*, Vol. ii.

THE DUBLIN UNIVERSITY BROOCH.

THIS is of very fine workmanship, and the delicate tracery, when closely examined, is found to be formed by the interlacing of the bodies and legs of animals, particularly the Irish Elk.

THE KNIGHT TEMPLAR'S BROOCH.

So called from the Ecclesia-Gothio character of the original ornament and the fact of its having been found in the excavation at Kilmainham, Co. Dublin, where once stood an Hospital of the Order of Templars.

It is supposed to have been worn by the Grand Master ; the ornamentation is similar in character to that of the Tara, but not so fine.

THE CLARENDON OR OGHAM BROOCH.

THE original is in the possession of the Royal Irish Academy and is the only one found in Ireland yet known to bear an inscription which is in the Ogham character. It was found by a peasant in turning up the ground on the Hill of Ballispillan in the County Kilkenny, in 1806.

The front of the brooch is ornamented by a device of entwined serpents such as is met with on objects of the same kind. The back presents four lines of writing in the Ogham character.

THE DUNSHAUGHLIN BROOCH.

THIS brooch, which is made of bronze, is highly ornamented with delicate tracery of interlaced patterns of Celtic ornamentation and was found in a crannoge near Dunshaughlin, County Meath, in 1843.

THE CONYNGHAM BROOCH, the original of which is in bronze, was found on the estate of the Marquis of Conyngham (hence its name) at Slane, in County Meath.

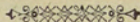
THE ARBUTUS BROOCH. This is the only brooch where both sides are alike ; it derives its name from the bulbs resembling the berries of the Arbutus tree.

THE DALRIADA BROOCH.

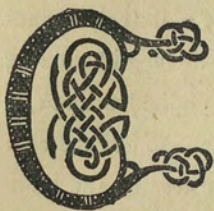
THIS brooch was discovered in the neighbourhood of Coleraine, not far from the River Bann, on the County Antrim side of the river, by a young man whilst engaged in digging. It is of the cleft pattern, that is, the circlet has an opening through which the pin or tongue may pass, and the part of the circle which adjoins this opening is made very broad to prevent the pin from slipping over, which would endanger its loss whenever it might be used ; on this broadened part of the circle the principle ornaments are disposed. It is probably a more ancient shape than the "Tara,"

for in it the circlet is complete and solid all round ; while, nevertheless, a part of the circumference is expanded into an exact resemblance of the corresponding portion of the cleft. As this flattening of the ring is of no use in brooches with an undivided circle, it is likely to have arisen merely in imitation of the cleft pattern, which must, therefore, be esteemed the more ancient style of brooch. The workmanship, though remarkably fine and very curious, is by no means so elaborate as that of the Tara brooch, which surpasses in its style of execution every other, whether of ancient or modern times, that has yet been exhibited or described.

THE BELL BROOCH is in the possession of a Mr. Bell, a distinguished Member of the Royal Irish Academy.



BULLÆ OR AMULETS



COMPOSED of lead and covered with highly decorated gold plates are not of uncommon occurrence in Ireland. The style of ornament resembles that in some of the cinerary urns, but is much more regular and exhibits a better order of art and workmanship. The one exhibited was found over a century ago in the Bog of Allen.

RING MONEY

ALTHOUGH I cannot subscribe to the general theory of "Ring Money," as a number of these articles can be assigned a plainer and more ostensible use, yet a number of the small, thick gold circular articles may have been used merely as a means of barter, and to no other use can they at present be assigned, and the fact

that among them may be found several ancient counterfeits, formed of copper, covered with thin plates of gold, rather strengthens the idea that they were intended as a circulating medium. In shape they are nearly all similar, and vary in diameter from $\frac{3}{8}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch.

EARRINGS,

IN Irish "Unasca," are represented in this collection by the ancient Irish spinning wheel and the twist torque patterns. Each ring is disunited, but was probably closed after having been passed through a hole in the lobe of the ear.

The twisted torque pattern, terminating in circular collars from which the plain round ends proceed, are said to have been found near Castlerea, County Roscommon.

GOLD PINS,

IN Irish "Dealg Oir." They are very rare and consist of small rings and long pins; these ring tops resemble the torques in pattern.

HAIR ORNAMENTS.

HAVE been frequently found in Ireland, both plain and decorated. Their use has not with certainty been determined, but in all likelihood they were employed as fillets or forehead bands for confining the hair.

They were found during the arterial drainage operations in the townland of Belleville, parish of Kilmore, County Cavan.

PENNACULAR BROOCHES have been found throughout Ireland from a very early period, in gold, silver, and bronze of various alloys, and judging from the numbers in the different museums and private collections, there have been more personal ornaments of this description found than of any other. The variety of design and execution of the various specimens discovered show that those belonging to a period between the sixth and twelfth centuries exceed in beauty of design any other examples of metal work discovered within these dates, the fine gold and enamel panning of the Tara and Cavan Torc brooches being unique as

specimens of the goldsmith's and enameller's art. The brooches found of a later date than the twelfth century are less artistic, and the workmanship inferior to those of the earlier date, and bear evidence of Danish and Norwegian characters of ornamentation, which was evidently introduced when these northern invaders overran Ireland.

The small pennacular brooches, which are an enlargement of the pennacular pins, are not ornamented in fine gold after the manner of the larger brooches, enamel being more generally employed in design in various colours, more pleasing to the eye, judging from such specimens as are in the collection belonging to Trinity College, Dublin, which are simply marvels of the enamelling art.

CLOAK PINS.

THESE are styled in Irish as "dealg," "briar," "duillenn," and "brolagha" (spear-like), and have been discovered in Ireland in greater numbers and variety and of more beauty in design and workman-

manship than in any other country in Europe. In these articles the process of development is displayed in a most remarkable manner, for from the simple unadorned pin or spike of copper, bronze, or brass, the metallic representation of the "dealg" or thorn to the most elegantly wrought ring top of precious metals, every stage of art, both in form and handicraft, is clearly defined.

In the first stage all the artist's powers seem to have been exhausted on the decoration of the pin itself, or in the development of the head, which was enlarged and modelled into every conceivable shape, and decorated with a great variety of patterns. When it was scarcely possible to effect further improvements on the head, a shank-ring was added either by means of a rivet passed through the head or a simple loop running through a hole in the neck. In the next step the ring was doubled, or several distinct rings were employed. Then the ring itself became the chief object in this article of personal decoration, and the acus or pin was of secondary importance.

Finally, the ring was enlarged or flattened out,

decorated, enamelled, covered with filigree, and jewelled, until, in those magnificent specimens of silver and gold and "findruine" or white metal found in Ireland of late years, it reached a degree of perfection which modern art can with difficulty imitate.

SPRING BROOCHES.

THESE brooches present characters that resemble classic fibulæ more than any other articles of personal decoration in the Royal Irish Academy, but at the same time the ornamentation resembles the Celtic trumpet-pattern; its acus or pin is fixed by a loop, and in some instances by a spire of one or two coils attached to one end, and passing along the back it is looped in a catch behind and termed a "rat-trap spring."

Some of these resemble coiled snakes, and are denominated spring brooches of the "Serpent pattern." In these the body of the snake is flattened out—into that form which several of the cobra

species assume when irritated and standing partially erect—while the tail portion is coiled several times on itself, and fastens in a catch formed in the neck. A very fine specimen was found at Navan Rath, County Armagh.

THE HINGE BROOCH. Of all the bronze articles connected with personal decoration in the collection of the Royal Irish Academy, there are few can equal in design and workmanship the hinge brooch, which was found in the Ardakillen crannoge, near Strokestown, in County Roscommon.

The decoration on the enlarged ends partakes of the Celtic trumpet-pattern, with a central connecting curved strap decorated with a raised interlaced pattern like that seen on some of our sculptured crosses.

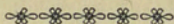
TURTLE BROOCHES found at Island Bridge, near the river Liffey, County Dublin, and so called from their resemblance to the turtle. The ornament on these brooches, with one exception, proves them to have been of Scandinavian origin.

MEYTHERS.

THE ancient Irish drinking cups called meythers or milk cups are now entirely disused or only to be found in the remotest mountain wilds of our country. They are associated in our minds with the simplicity and hospitality of by-gone times.

They are found in various parts of the country and the specimens shown are of the usual size and form, round at the bottom, quadrangular at the top and usually with a handle at each of its four sides; some have only two handles, and there are others without any handles of the beaker form. The use of the four handles appears to have been for the greater convenience of passing the cup round from one to the other.

The meyther was universally used in Ireland, for it is found in bogs in all parts of the island, and judging from the great depth at which it is often discovered its antiquity must be extreme indeed.



DUNVEGAN CUP.

THIS very singular cup is known as the "Dunvegan Cup," from its having been long preserved at Dunvegan Castle, Isle of Skye, as an heirloom of McLeod of McLeod.

The extreme rarity of such an example of the skill of ancient Irish workmanship and the very curious nature of its ornamentation warrants more than passing notice. It is a cup of wood, either alder or yew, such as is generally called a meyther, and is much older than the inscription which bears date 1493; the legs are meant to represent human legs, but show no attempt at modelling.

The silver mounting bears the following inscription :

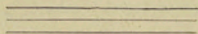
"Katherine of noble birth of the O'Neills, wife of John Maguire, a prince of Fermanagh, caused this to be made."

SITULA CUP.

FROM the collection of Robert Day, Esq., F.S.A., Cork, is composed of yew wood with little decoration upon it except for the pear-shaped ornament round the bowl. It was evidently used at the festive board along with the meyther cups in ancient times.

BRIAN BOROIHME HARP.

IT is well known that the great monarch Brian Boroihme was killed at the battle of Clontarf, A.D. 1014. He left with his son Donagh his harp, but Donagh having murdered his brother Teige and having been deposed by his nephew, retired to Rome and carried with him the crown, harp, and other regalia of his father which he presented to the Pope. The Pope presented the harp to Henry VIII., who gave it to the first Earl of Clanricarde, in whose family it remained until the beginning of the eighteenth century, when it came into the possession of Commissioner MacNamara of Limerick. In 1782 it was presented to the Right Hon. William Conyngham, who deposited it in the Museum of Trinity College, Dublin, where it now is.



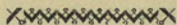
IRISH RUSH-LIGHT STANDS.

RUSH-LIGHT stands first came into use in Ireland about the tenth century; they have now fallen

almost entirely into disuse. Several I have been fortunate enough to find, were evidently thrown out as useless, and it was from amongst rubbish in the yard they were found.

Some are all iron, others are iron except the base, which is of wood ; they vary in length considerably, one description being intended to stand on the floor ; others, and by far the most numerous sort, are those intended to stand on a table.

Ornamentation has been attempted and generally consists in twisting the iron of the shank and sometimes that of the head of the socket. The system adopted for holding the rushes and candles is simply counterpoised pincers which are self-acting, the weight of the socket-arm being sufficient to close the pincers and so hold the rush ; others are held in pincers by means of a spring.





CELTS.

THE term Celt from "celtis," a chisel, was adopted more than a century ago to designate those weapon tools in the shape of axes, hatchets, adzes, and chisels. That they are most ancient weapons next to those of stone, may be gleaned from the fact of their being almost the only antique implements of any kind formed out of copper, and from their great similarity in shape, use, and mode of adjustment to the stone celts.

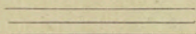
The term "paalstab" or "palstave," applied to the long narrow-winged celt, is of Scandinavian origin, and said to have designated the weapons employed by some Northern tribes for battering the shields of their enemies. Iron implements of this description are still used in Iceland either for digging the ground or breaking the ice; but before a collection of some hundreds of these implements, considered as articles of war, or, like their predecessors in stone, as weapon-tools, we perceive that these so-called "paalstabs" are but a

necessary and gradual link which the simple flat axe blade passed through, to the highly finished socketed celt, richly ornamented and supplied with a loop for securing to the shaft which was inserted into it. The collection of celts in the Royal Irish Academy at present is over 700 specimens, no two of which are alike; they are classified under three different heads—First, the plain hatchet-shaped piece of metal which passes into and probably through the wooden handle; secondly, the winged celt or “palstave” which mutually received and was received into the handle; and thirdly, the socketed celt into which the handle was inserted.

Copper and bronze celts, axes, and palstaves form one of the most complete collections in the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy, and are undoubtedly the most numerous assemblage of such implements known to the learned of Europe.

When the stone-weaponed people acquired a knowledge of the metallurgic art, it would appear that they still retained the same principles of design, were influenced by similar habits of thought, and adopted the

same mode of warfare, the type of the old stone celt being preserved in the form of the newly introduced and gradually adopted metal weapon. Both stone and copper, or bronze, were in all probability for a long time co-existent, the former slowly giving place to the latter as the match-lock was replaced by the musket and after many years by the rifle. In no other class of implement is the process of development more truly represented than in the gradual transition of the metal celt.



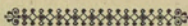
TRUMPETS.

THE bronze trumpets and horns now in the collection of the Royal Irish Academy are of two kinds, those blown from the ends, the mouthpieces of which are not forthcoming, and the trumpets with lateral embrasures or mouth-hole, and closed at the small extremities.

It is not possible by any yet discovered method of applying the lips to this mouth-hole, to produce a

musical sound, but it is conjectured these instruments might have been used as speaking-trumpets to convey the voice to a great distance as well as render it much louder ; they may have been useful to commanders in the warfare of former days. Diodorus Siculus, writing of the Celtic Gauls, states—"They have amongst them trumpets peculiar as well to themselves as to other nations ; these by inflation emit an hoarse sound well suited to the din of battle."

And Polybius says that "the parade and tumult of the army of the Celts terrified the Romans: for there was amongst them an infinite number of horns and trumpets, which, with the shouts of the whole army in concert, made a clamour so terrible and loud that every surrounding echo was awakened and all the adjacent country seemed to join in the horrible din.



THE BOOK OF KELLS.

THE Book of Kells is "the most beautiful book in the world" (Westwood). It is a MS. of the eighth century, [containing the four Gospels in Latin, with prologue, &c. Mr. Digby Wyatt writes thus:—

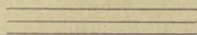
"In delicacy of handling, and minute but faultless execution, the whole range of palæography offers nothing comparable to these early Irish MSS., and those produced in the same style in England. The most marvellous of them all is the Book of Kells, some of the ornaments of which I attempted to copy, but broke down in despair. Mr. Westwood examined the pages as I did for hours together, without ever detecting a false line or irregular interlacement."

Dr. Waagen says that "the ornamental pages, borders, and initial letters (of the MSS.) exhibit such a rich variety of beautiful and peculiar designs, so admirable a taste in the arrangement of the colours, and such an uncommon perfection and finish that one feels absolutely struck with amazement." Splendid as

are the kindred MSS. known as the Book of Lindisfarne, and the Book of St. Chad, and the Gospels of MacRegol, the Book of Kells far surpasses them, both in the lavish abundance and the minute delicacy of its ornamentation. Besides the numerous pages which are entirely covered with ornaments, the initial letters of every sentence in the Gospels are treated as a subject for the artist, and this with the most amazing variety. The grace and beauty of the design are well matched by the exquisite softness and harmony of the colouring, which is in general well preserved.

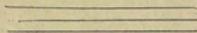
I exhibit numerous grotesque initial letters reproduced in metal as well as the first page of St. Mark's Gospel, containing the words *INITIUM EVANGELII IHU XBI*, *IHU* = *Iesu* (Genitive); *XBI* = *Christi*. Latin MSS. retained the Greek contraction *IHS*. The name *Iesus* was indeed often written *Ihesus*, so that *Ihs* and *Ihu* might pass with the reader as Latin contractions. The Greek contraction of *Christus* was also retained—*XPS* or *χρς* (*P* being the Greek *R*); but in the picture pages of this book *B* is usually written

for P. Under the cross of the T are the wings of two dragons. The grotesque human figure at the top is entwined with a dragon.



MR. DAY'S COLLECTION (ORIGINALS).

1. Bronze Brooch, with letter-press description.
From Cavan.
2. Another of Copper, with very slight alloy. Lough
Gill, Co. Sligo.
3. One of the missing figures of St. Manchan's Shrine.
4. Bronze figure of the Saviour. Red Abbey, Co.
Longford.
5. Ornamented Bronze Cloak Pin, with a setting of
blue glass. From Clonmacnoise.
6. A Bronze Ring Pin. From the Abbey, Boyle.



THE CROZIER OF THE BISHOP OF LIMERICK.

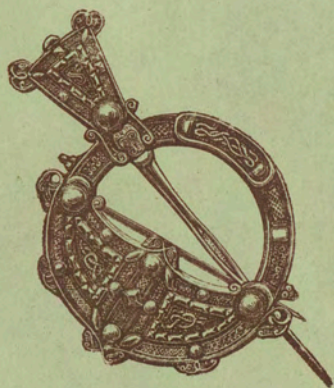
To exemplify the exquisite articles that can be compiled from pure Celtic ornamentation, I have

induced the Most Rev. Dr. O'Dwyer, the Bishop of Limerick, to lend me a crozier which I made for his lordship some few years since, and it is now on view with my collection of copies of antiquities.

The whole outline as well as the ornamentation is purely Celtic, the crook of the crozier is in the form of a serpent which encloses the figure of St. Patrick, and on the back of the crozier an Irish cross. The first boss which is treated with Irish interlacings encloses the emblem of the Sacred Heart; beneath are niches containing figures of St. Ita and St. Munchin, and there is graceful decoration of wheat and grapes with foliage, emblematic of bread and wine, with a chalice and a ciborium produced in repousé, the rest is all treated in the highest style of Celtic art, introducing jewels, etc., etc. It stands about 6 ft. 3 in. high, is of solid silver, and is one of a great number of pieces in which I have introduced Celtic ornamentation I think with success.

T16.3

J66



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